THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) 68,000 Indians have returned to Kuwait so far,

(b) The number of Indians working in Kuwait is estimated at 65,000.

(c) Government have taken various steps to facilitate and speed the return of the Indian nationals repatriated from the Gulf; these include waiver of immigration Clearance Requirement, speedier issuance of passports and reintroduction of Air India flights to Kuwait.

Petroleum And Natural Gas Projects for Kerala

2735. SHRI KODIKKUNIL SURESH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the petroleum and natural Gas projects for Kerala pending with the Union Government for approval;

(b) the action taken so far in each case; and

(c) the reason for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND); (a) to (c). The following two project proposals are at different stages of consideration of the Government.

(i) Expansion of the refining capacity of the Cochin Refineries Limited; and

(ii) Increasing capacity for additional Benzene production by cochin Refineries Limited.

World bank aid to Oilpalm cultivation in Kerala

2736. SHRI KUDIKUNNIL SURESH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank aided scheme to grow Oilpalm trees in Kerala is in progress;

(b) if so, the cost of the scheme;

(c) the places where this scheme is under operation in that state;

(d) whether the Government propose to cover more places under this scheme in Kerala; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) There is no World Bank aided scheme for oil palm in Kerala.

(b) to (e). Do not arise.

Increase in Prices of Food Grade Hexane

2737. SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has been taken to increase the prices of food grade hexane a crucial input for manufacturing Solvent extracted vegetable oils and deoiled meals; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) and (b). Hexane is not a price administred product. Oil Industry determines the of Hexane on market considerations.

Girls Hostels for Scheduled Caste Students

2738. SHRI DHARMABIKASHAM: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state: